CALGARY SAFETY CONSULTANTS

Health and Safety Policy Template

Write it, sign it, post it, review it

How to use this template

Use this template to write or update your organization's health and safety policy, the short, signed statement of commitment at the front of your health and safety program. Work through Parts A to C, compare your draft with the worked sample in Part D and the legal summary in Part E, then use Parts F and G to record how the policy was signed, posted, communicated and reviewed. Fill it in on screen or print it.

- **Aim for one page.** Keep procedures out of the policy; they belong in your program and manual.
- **Write like a person.** Use "we" for the company and "you" for workers. Every sentence should be something a new worker understands.
- **Make promises you keep.** Each commitment should be backed by a real part of your program. Avoid guarantees and slogans.
- **Consult before you sign.** Review the draft with your joint committee or health and safety representative. Several jurisdictions require it.
- **The top person signs.** The current owner, president or most senior leader of the business unit signs and dates it.

Key terms

Term	What it means
Health and safety policy	A short written statement of the organization's commitment to health and safety, the responsibilities of each level, and its commitment to follow the law. Also called an OHS policy or safety policy statement.
Health and safety program	The system that delivers the policy: hazard assessment, inspections, training, investigations, emergency response, worker participation and review.
Safety manual	The documents that describe the program, plus the forms and records that prove it is working.
Most senior leader	The owner, president, CEO or general manager of the business unit the policy covers. COR audit tools look for the current leader's signature.
Committee or representative	The joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative (names differ by jurisdiction) that represents workers on health and safety.
Certifying partner	The organization that issues CORs and SECORs in your province and industry. Consultants and auditors don't issue certificates.

Part A: Organization details

Legal name

Operating name

Business units, sites and operations this policy covers

Number of workers

Committee or representative

Policy owner (position)

Drafted by

Version

Draft date

Replaces version dated

Jurisdictions where we work (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Federal
- ☐ British Columbia
- ☐ Alberta
- ☐ Saskatchewan
- ☐ Manitoba
- ☐ Ontario
- ☐ Quebec
- ☐ New Brunswick
- ☐ Nova Scotia
- ☐ Prince Edward Island
- ☐ Newfoundland and Labrador
- ☐ Yukon
- ☐ Northwest Territories
- ☐ Nunavut
- ☐ Outside Canada

General information, not legal advice. Occupational health and safety requirements differ between provinces, territories and federally regulated workplaces, so adapt this form to your workplace and confirm the requirements that apply to you.

Part B: Write your policy statement

Fill in each section. Read the guidance note, look at the example, then write your own words in the box. Keep each section short; together they should fit on one page.

1. Purpose and commitment

Guidance: Say why health and safety matters to you and what you're aiming for. Include physical and psychological health.

Example: "At [Company], nothing we do is worth getting hurt for. We are committed to protecting the physical and psychological health and safety of everyone who works for us or with us."

2. Scope

Guidance: Say who and where the policy covers: employees, supervisors, contractors, visitors, every site and vehicle.

Example: "This policy applies to all employees, contractors and visitors at our shop, offices, vehicles and every site where we work."

3. Our commitments

Guidance: List four to six commitments you will keep: legal compliance, hazard control, training and resources, investigation, consultation, objectives and review.

Example: "We will meet or exceed the OHS laws that apply wherever we work. We will identify hazards and eliminate or control them. We will give you the training, equipment, supervision and time to work safely."

4. Responsibilities

Guidance: One or two sentences for each group. Detail belongs in a separate statement of responsibilities and in job descriptions.

Senior management

Supervisors

Workers

Contractors and visitors

5. Worker rights and participation

Guidance: Name the rights to know, to participate and to refuse unsafe work, and promise no reprisal for raising concerns in good faith.

Example: "You have the right to know about the hazards of your work, to take part in health and safety, and to refuse work you believe is dangerous. No one will be punished for raising a concern in good faith."

6. Objectives and review

Guidance: Commit to setting objectives and reviewing the policy and program. Annual review is a good standard everywhere and required in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Example: "We will set health and safety objectives each year, review our performance with our committee, and review this policy at least once a year."

7. Signature

Name of most senior leader	Title	Business unit

Signature	Date signed	Next review date	Committee reviewed (date)

Part C: Optional clauses

Tick any clause that fits your work and add it to Part B in your own words. Don't add a clause you can't back up with a real part of your program.

- ☐ **Psychological health:** "We will identify and control psychosocial hazards, including workload, harassment and violence, as seriously as physical hazards."
- ☐ **Harassment and violence:** "Harassment and violence are not tolerated. Our separate prevention policy explains how to report and how we respond."
- ☐ **Impairment and fitness for duty:** "Everyone must be fit for work. If you're impaired for any reason, including fatigue, tell your supervisor."
- ☐ **Reporting:** "Report every hazard, incident and near miss. We investigate to learn, not to blame."
- ☐ **Stop work:** "Anyone can stop a job they believe is unsafe, without penalty."
- ☐ **Contractors:** "We select and monitor contractors for their safety performance and hold them to our standards."
- ☐ **Working alone and remote work:** "Workers who work alone or remotely will have a check-in procedure and a way to get help."
- ☐ **Driving:** "Driving is work. We plan trips, manage fatigue and expect seat belts and no handheld phones at the wheel."
- ☐ **Environment:** "We will prevent spills and releases and meet the environmental laws that apply to our work."
- ☐ **Continual improvement:** "We will measure our performance, learn from audits and incidents, and keep improving."
- ☐ **Management system:** "Our program follows a plan, do, check, act cycle and is aligned with [COR / SECOR / ISO 45001]."
- ☐ **Community and public:** "We will protect members of the public who could be affected by our work."

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Other clauses we will add

Part D: Worked sample policy

This sample is illustrative. Rewrite it for your work, your people and your jurisdictions before you use it.

Health and Safety Policy: Sample Mechanical Ltd. (illustrative)

At Sample Mechanical, nothing we do is worth getting hurt for. We are committed to protecting the physical and psychological health and safety of everyone who works for us or with us, and our goal is that everyone goes home healthy at the end of every shift.

Our commitments. We will meet or exceed the occupational health and safety laws that apply wherever we work. We will identify hazards and eliminate or control them. We will give you the training, equipment, supervision and time you need to work safely. We will investigate incidents and near misses to learn from them, not to blame. We will consult with you and our health and safety committee, and we will set and review health and safety objectives every year.

Responsibilities. Management provides the resources and leadership for our health and safety program and holds everyone accountable for it. Supervisors make sure work is planned and done safely, and correct unsafe acts and conditions. Workers follow safe work procedures, use the required protective equipment, and report hazards, incidents and near misses. Contractors and visitors follow our rules and their own.

Your rights. You have the right to know about the hazards of your work, to take part in health and safety, and to refuse work you believe is dangerous. No one will be punished for raising a concern in good faith.

We will review this policy at least once a year.

Signed: [Name], President. Date signed: [date]. Next review: [date]. Reviewed with the joint health and safety committee on [date].

Part E: What the law requires (quick reference)

Summary only. Thresholds count workers differently between jurisdictions, and there are exceptions and other required policies not shown. Check the legislation and your regulator before relying on a row.

Jurisdiction	What the law requires	Who it applies to	Review, posting and signing
Federal (Canada Labour Code)	Statement of the employer's general health and safety policy made readily available (s. 125(1)(d)); policies and programs developed with the policy committee, workplace committee or representative (z.09)	Federally regulated employers	Readily available in printed and electronic form
British Columbia	Formal program including a statement of the employer's aims and the responsibilities of employer, supervisors and workers (OHS Regulation s. 3.3(a))	20+ workers with a moderate or high hazard workplace, or 50+ workers; smaller employers run a less formal program (s. 3.2)	No set interval; periodic management meetings review activities and incident trends
Alberta	Health and safety program (OHS Act s. 16); government says there are no mandatory elements	20+ regularly employed workers, or on a Director's direction	Not set in law; leadership and commitment is a standard element
Saskatchewan	Program with a statement of the employer's health and safety policy (Reg. 3-11(1)(a)) and a statement of responsibilities (3-11(1)(d))	Prescribed places of employment with 10+ workers	Program reviewed at intervals of no more than 3 years; guidance: most senior manager signs; policy made known to all employees
Manitoba	Written program with a statement of the employer's policy (Act s. 7.4(5)(a))	Workplaces with 20+ workers regularly employed	Program reviewed every 3 years or sooner; developed with committee or representative; available on request

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Jurisdiction	What the law requires	Who it applies to	Review, posting and signing
Ontario	Written OHS policy, reviewed at least once a year, and a program to implement it; copy posted (OHSA 25(2)(j), (k))	More than five workers regularly employed	Annual review; posted (or readily accessible electronic format). Separate violence and harassment policies reviewed annually
Quebec	Prevention program (CNESST); a stand-alone policy statement is not in the minimum content	Establishments with 20+ workers (action plan at 19 or fewer)	Keep the program up to date as the workplace changes; confirm update rules with the CNESST
New Brunswick	Written safety policy setting out responsibilities, developed with employees (s. 8)	20+ employees (s. 8); 5 to 19 for each place of employment (s. 17(1))	Copy kept at each workplace; WorkSafeNB advises dated, reviewed and signed annually
Nova Scotia	Written OHS policy (s. 27); program at 20+ (s. 28)	5+ employees	Reviewed at least annually (Act); developed with committee or representative; guide: posted prominently, senior manager signs
Prince Edward Island	Written OHS program including a comprehensive OHS policy	20+ workers	Available and accessible to all employees
Newfoundland and Labrador	Written policy under 10 workers (Act s. 36.2); program at 10+ (s. 36.1)	All employers, by size	Policy posted, developed with representative or designate; program signed, dated and reviewed at least every 3 years
Yukon	Health and safety management system including a health and safety policy	20+ workers regularly employed (since July 1, 2022)	Developed with the JHSC; employer sets review expectations
NWT and Nunavut	General employer duties under the Safety Acts and OHS Regulations	Confirm with the WSCC	Confirm with the WSCC

Sources: Canada Labour Code Part II; WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation Part 3; Alberta OHS Act s. 16 and alberta.ca; WorkSafe Saskatchewan; Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act s. 7.4; Ontario Guide to the OHSA; CNESST; WorkSafeNB; Nova Scotia guide and Bill 62 (1996); WCB PEI; WorkplaceNL; Yukon WSCB; WSCC. Checked October 2026.

Part F: Signing, posting and communication record

Record where the signed policy is posted and how it was communicated. COR auditors ask workers where the policy is available, then check those locations.

Location posted or published	Date posted	Posted by	Current?	Notes
Main office safety board			☐	
Shop or yard safety board			☐	
Site trailer(s)			☐	
Company vehicles			☐	
Intranet or safety app			☐	
Front of safety manual			☐	
			☐	
			☐	

Communication method	Date	Delivered by	People reached	Done	Notes
New worker orientation				☐	
Company or safety meeting				☐	
Supervisor toolbox talks				☐	
Contractor orientation				☐	
Email or app notice				☐	
Committee meeting				☐	

Part G: Annual review log

Review the policy at least once a year and whenever the senior leader, your operations or your jurisdictions change. Even with no changes, re-sign and re-date it.

Review date	Reviewed by	Committee	Changes made	Re-signed	Next review
		☐		☐	
		☐		☐	
		☐		☐	
		☐		☐	
		☐		☐	
		☐		☐	

Before you sign: final check

- ☐ It fits on about one page, with no procedures.
- ☐ A new worker could understand every sentence.
- ☐ It covers physical and psychological health, and contractors and visitors.
- ☐ It names responsibilities for management, supervisors and workers.
- ☐ It commits to legal compliance in the jurisdictions where we actually work.
- ☐ It states workers' rights and promises no reprisal for raising concerns.
- ☐ Every commitment is backed by a real part of our program.
- ☐ The committee, representative or employees have reviewed it, as our law requires.
- ☐ The current most senior leader will sign and date it, with a next review date.

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Introducing the policy: toolbox talk notes

- Hand out or display the signed policy. Say who signed it and why it matters to them.
- Pick one commitment and give a real example from this crew's work: "This is what 'we will give you the time to work safely' looks like here."
- Explain the right to refuse and how to report a concern, and that no one is punished for raising one in good faith.
- Show where the policy is posted on this site and in the app.
- Ask the crew: "What does this policy mean to you?" Write down questions and follow up.
- Record the talk in Part F.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Copying a template word for word, including another company's name or another province's law.
- Writing procedures into the policy, so it runs to several pages and goes out of date.
- Signed by the safety coordinator, or by a leader who has left. No date signed.
- Posted in the office only, so field crews and night shifts never see it.
- Never explained at orientation or meetings, so workers can't describe it in an audit interview.
- Leaving out psychological health, or making promises daily practice doesn't keep.
- No annual review, and no record of the reviews you did.

Free guide. Read How to Write a Health and Safety Policy at calgarysafetyconsultants.ca/safety-guides/safety-programs/health-and-safety-policy/. Questions? Call Calgary Safety Consultants at 1-888-231-0358.

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